

SNAKE

INT THE PINES. NIGHT

The face of Snake, a beautiful woman in her late 20's, fills the screen as she dances in her usual slow sensual way. She rarely changes the speed of her dancing in spite of the tempo of the music but somehow she is always in sync. At first it seems she could be anywhere but slowly The Pines, a dimly lit strip bar is revealed. She is wearing a long dark satin nightgown with a lacy robe over it and very high spike heels. Several customers sit around the stage which is in the center of the room. Snake loves dancing and turning men on. Dollar bills are placed in the elastic band around her ankle. She doesn't wear the customary garter around her thigh because she doesn't permit the touching that some other girls permit. On the opposite end of the room is the bar with a few customers at the bar. A man is standing at the end of the bar by himself drinking a Pabst long neck and playing a blackjack machine. Snake moves, stops at the corner of the stage and bends down to tease an older man with her top just flashing him a little full breast. He loves it. They exchange a laugh and he gives her a twenty dollar bill.

SNAKE

Thanks Mr. Blake

BLAKE

Always my pleasure Snake.

As she stands up, she slowly teases off her top to a huge round of applause and cheers. She looks over to the corner of the bar and moves her hand toward her heart with her first two fingers extended, touches her left breast, then moves the fingers to her lips and blows a kiss toward the corner of the bar.

CUT TO:

Jim, the man at the bar playing the blackjack game, smiles at Snake and duplicates the signal Snake just made. He's in his late forties and handsome in an odd way.

FLASHBACK

INT DR. JIMS OFFICE. DAY

Jim is in his college office at his desk. He wads up a piece of paper and throws it toward the trash can near his door. The trash can has a small hoop and backboard on it. Snake busts into the room in a panic.

SNAKE

(Plainer out of the bar,  
but still very pretty.)

Excuse me!

JIM

(Smiles at her)

Yes?

SNAKE  
I can't find my damn reading class!

JIM  
(Sees she's distressed.)  
May I see your schedule.  
(Looks at the it.)  
Second floor Room 202.  
(She looks confused.)

He gets up and moves into the hall with her.

Through the doors, up the stairs  
and it'll be on your right.

SNAKE  
(Checking him out.)  
Thanks, do you teach it?

He shakes his head no. She smiles at him.

Too bad. I'll stop by again, next  
time I'm lost.

She turns to leave.

JIM  
Or any time you want.

She turns back to him and smiles again. He watches her walk  
away. At the door leading outside, is Andy, a security guard,  
who opens the door for her. They exchange a quick glance of  
interest and smile at each other.

#### FLASH FORWARD

INT TOPLESS BAR. SAME NIGHT

Nick, the heavyset bartender, moves to the end of the bar  
where Jim is playing blackjack. Along the way he stops to  
get a beer and gives it to another customer.

NICK  
Luck still holding, James?

JIM  
Darrest thing, Nick. I'm winning  
like 75% of the time. Me and the  
Wizards we're on a roll.

NICK  
Atlantic city time. Did you see  
that game last night? Wilkens,  
next Jordan for sure.

Snake is dancing in the background as Nick and Jim talk.

JIM  
That spin move he made on Carter,  
jock strap on the floor, he floated  
like a dancer. Pure art.

NICK  
It's a sport. Dancing is art.

JIM  
(Indicating Snake)  
Right, she is pure art.

NICK  
She's good, but I mean real  
dancing. Nureyev, now that was a  
dancer. When he did a leap, the  
Gods smiled.

Nick works the bar as they enjoy disagreeing with each other.

JIM  
Exactly like Wilkens. That last  
jump shot that won the game, art!  
Gods smiled on me and Harper lost  
50 bucks.

NICK  
It's not art it's a sport. Pure  
muscle memory, competition, no  
sense of the beauty of what they  
do.

JIM  
I don't know, when Wilkens started  
trash talking Jones after he slam  
dunked over him, he knew what he'd  
just done. I was uplifted and  
moved. It seemed like art to me.

NICK  
Hopeless. For an educated man  
you're common. Someday, I'll take  
you to an opera with great ballet  
and then you'll know what I'm  
talking about. Tomorrow--game,  
right?

JIM  
Maybe.

NICK  
(A little perturbed)  
I thought you'd decided.

JIM  
I'm still thinking about it.

NICK  
It's your problem, my friend.  
Another Blue?

Jim nods his head yes. He finishes the last bit of beer in bottle and goes back to playing video blackjack.

FLASHBACK

INT DR. JIMS OFFICE. DAY

Jim is in a heated discussion with Andy, the security guard.

JIM  
What a totally ridiculous thing to do. That man was a guest of the college and you gave him a parking ticket.

ANDY  
Hey, Dr. Jim I'm just doin' my job. You got a complaint, call my supervisor.

JIM  
That's just what I intend....

Snake appears in the doorway.

Excuse me. Need to talk to this student.

SNAKE  
That's OK Dr. Jamison, I can wait.....

JIM  
No, Snake come right in. Officer Elliot was just leaving.

Jim turns to sit down. As he does Andy and Snake exchange smiles, a look of recognition. Andy leaves and Jim indicates that Snake should sit.

I owe you. Guy's is a real pain. He got a uniform, became a Nazi.

SNAKE  
He don't seem the type but it happens. Seen it a lot in the places I've been.

JIM  
OK I'm curious. The last time you were here you made that same kind

of remark. Now it's time to explain.

SNAKE

(She's not so sure he's ready for this.)

OK...I'll give you the quick version. Hope you got a strong stomach. Cause this is not a pretty picture. Can I smoke?

He points to the no smoking sign. She gets up and closes the door. She quickly lights a cigarette, talking as she does so.

I was sent away to a special school in Lewiston, Oak Hills. Heard of it?

He shakes his head, no.

Doesn't matter. I was sent there because they couldn't handle me at my regular high school. They could almost stand the dope smoking but when I punched out another girl. Out I went.

Jim puts his head in his hand as he shakes it in disbelief. Snake doesn't notice. She moves around the office a bit nervously looking for someplace to put her ashes and finds nothing.

Well, of course, at Oak Hill there was more drugs than I ever imagined. We had a big party one night, things got wild as hell and I had to throw somebody through a window.

JIM

Whoa! Explain that.

He gets the trash can for Snake to put her long ash in. She crosses over to him, sits as she flicks ash into trash can.

SNAKE

This bitch asked my boy friend to screw her. He told me. I threw her through the window.

JIM

(Fascinated by her directness.)

Yeah, well, I guess that's reasonable.

DISSOLVE TO:

A montage of scenes with V.0. in which we see the relationship develop.

INT ART GALLERY. DAY

Jim standing in front of a painting. Snake moves into the frame and takes his hand to lead him to something she wants him to see. They stand there holding hands.

SNAKE (V.0.)

He was real surprised I cared that much. Then they sent my ass down state to Chaney, the women's prison. That place scared the shit out of me. If it wasn't for this girl I met, Tyisha, I probably would be dead by now or would have had to hurt someone bad. All most of those bitches want is some nice young virgin like me. That I couldn't do. Tyisha, took me under her wing, protected me. She was a dancer and told me about it. Told me who to talk to when I got out so I could get this dancing job. I call her once a week. When she gets out we'll be a team. Probably start our own club where girls will be treated right and make good money besides the tips. You should come and see me dance some time.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT PARK. DAY

Jim and Snake walking along a path in a lush green wooded area. Jim stops and points toward the trees to indicate a bird and indicates she should be quiet. Jim hands her binoculars. She looks and sees the bird. She's excited and turns to him and kisses him on the cheek. This then turns into a passionate kiss.

JIM (V.0.)

I'd definitely like to see you but I'm not sure I'm ready for the dancing. Let's do something away from where we both work.

DISSOLVE TO:

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